

Media, Pa – Congressman Joe Sestak (PA-07) met with the employees of the American Reading Company yesterday to discuss their programs' positive impact on reading achievement of our nation's youth. The Congressman, who sits on the House Education and Labor Committee, is a member of the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary and Secondary Education. The Congressman commended the Company's recognition of the need to have teachers, families, and other organizations collaborate to improve the reading levels of our children.

"The development of exceptional reading skills and the cultivation of a love of books is a crucial aspect of early childhood development and often sets the course for the rest of a child's academic career," said the Congressman. "I am truly impressed by the connection with home and community that is nurtured through the American Reading Company's innovative curriculum, including a '100 Book Challenge.' Such programs ensure that academic success is rooted in a partnership between the student, their families, and their community. I was delighted to meet with so many bright minds in education."

Reflecting on the visit, Jane Hileman, Founder and CEO of American Reading Company remarked, "we were delighted to have Congressman Sestak visit our offices to learn about our workforce development initiative and the rapid gains in reading achievement that we are achieving in schools in Pennsylvania and across the country."

American Reading Company was founded in 1998 and is based in King of Prussia, PA. Today, more than a million students in over 1,800 schools, across 420 districts, in 40 states participate in the Company's programs. Extensive research results show that 100 Book Challenge has boosted the standardized reading test scores of students and dramatically closed the achievement gap in participating schools. Action 100 is the Company's most comprehensive intervention program to turnaround the nation's lowest performing schools under the requirements of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

*Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever elected to the U.S. House of Representatives.*